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Ninth progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Liberia

I. Introduction

1. By its resolution 1626 (2005) of 19 September 2005, the Security Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) until 31 March 2006 and requested me to report regularly on progress in the implementation of the Mission's mandate. The present report covers developments since my report of 1 September 2005 (S/2005/560).

II. Elections and major political developments

2. Developments related to the presidential and legislative elections dominated political activity in Liberia during the reporting period. The first round of the elections was held as scheduled on 11 October. The 22 registered political parties, two alliances and one coalition, which put forward some 205 Senate and 513 House of Representatives candidates, and the 22 presidential candidates, with their running mates, conducted their political campaigns in a generally peaceful manner.

3. In the weeks leading up to the elections, the Supreme Court of Liberia issued two decisions that presented challenges for the election schedule. On 22 September, the Court ordered the National Elections Commission to allow voters to cast two votes for the two senatorial seats in each county, instead of casting only one vote, as stipulated in the Electoral Reform Law. In the second decision, on 27 September, the Court ruled that the National Elections Commission should allow two additional independent presidential candidates and their running mates, as well as one candidate for the House of Representatives, a period of seven days to remedy deficiencies in their nomination papers, which had previously been rejected by the Commission.

4. After holding emergency talks to assess the implications of the Supreme Court rulings, the Implementation Monitoring Committee set up under the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and the International Contact Group on Liberia requested the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) mediator, General Abdulsalami Abubakar, to intervene to find a solution which would respect the rule of law while preserving the integrity of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. The Peace Agreement required the elections to be held no later than

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October 2005. The mediator met with the independent candidates concerned in Abuja and with other Liberian and international stakeholders in Monrovia, resulting in the agreement of the independent candidates to withdraw their candidacies, which allowed the elections to proceed on schedule. The first Supreme Court ruling, issued on 22 September, was implemented without affecting the election timetable. However, voters had to be re-educated on the new voting procedure.

5. The voting on 11 October was orderly and peaceful. Voter turnout was 74.9 per cent, and no serious security incidents were reported. The election was monitored by 436 international electoral observers, including a United States presidential observer delegation and representatives of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, ECOWAS, the African Union, the European Union, the Carter Center, the International Republican Institute, the National Democratic Institute, the European Federation of Liberian Associations and the West African Civil Society Forum. Some 35,000 representatives of Liberian political parties and independent candidates, as well as 3,600 representatives of 46 Liberian civilian society groups, also observed the elections. The reports issued by all observer groups characterized the elections as peaceful, orderly, free, fair, transparent and well-administered. The observers noted, however, that one of the primary challenges was the electorate's difficulty in understanding some of the voting instructions.

6. Nine political parties won seats in the 30-seat Senate. The Coalition for the Transformation of Liberia won seven seats, the Unity Party four and the Congress for Democratic Change, the Alliance for Peace and Democracy, the Liberty Party and former President Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Party three each. In addition, the National Democratic Party of Liberia obtained two seats, while the National Reformation Party and the All Liberian Coalition Party each won a single seat. Three independent candidates were also voted into the Senate. Five of the newly elected Senators are women, representing 16.7 per cent of the Senate.

7. Eleven political parties and seven independent candidates obtained seats in the 64-seat House of Representatives. These included the Congress for Democratic Change, which won 15 seats, the Liberty Party, which secured nine, and the Unity Party, which won eight. Eight of the newly elected representatives are women, representing 12.5 per cent of the House.

8. In the first round of the presidential elections, none of the candidates received more than 50 per cent of the votes. Consequently, in keeping with the Liberian Constitution and the Electoral Reform Law, the National Elections Commission scheduled a run-off election for 8 November between the two candidates who obtained the most votes, George Weah (28.3 per cent) and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf (19.8 per cent).

9. The political atmosphere during the campaign for the presidential run-off election was generally peaceful, but somewhat tense. The campaigning by the two sides was more personal than in the first round of the election and sometimes negative, with less debate on issues and more focus on personalities. During the campaign, Mr. Weah's party, the Congress for Democratic Change, asserted that there was a tradition of cheating in Liberia's elections and claimed that Mr. Weah had in fact won over 60 per cent of the votes during the first round of the elections.

10. Despite the somewhat negative messages during the political campaigning, the voting on 8 November took place in a peaceful atmosphere, and no incidents of

violence were reported. The election was observed by 302 international electoral observers, representing 27 international organizations and diplomatic missions, as well as 3,583 national observers. The preliminary assessments of these observers described the run-off election as generally free, fair and transparent. However, as the National Elections Commission started releasing the results on 9 November, Mr. Weah's party, the Congress for Democratic Change, alleged that it had evidence of "massive and systematic" fraud during the run-off election. On 10 November, the party submitted its complaints to the National Elections Commission and also filed a petition with the Supreme Court seeking the suspension of the ballot counting.

11. The allegations of the Congress for Democratic Change created some tension in Monrovia, where the party's supporters held demonstrations. On 11 November, UNMIL formed police units dispersed protesters who had started to throw stones at the Liberian National Police. On 14 November, several hundred of the party's supporters marched to UNMIL headquarters and the ECOWAS office, as well as the Nigerian Embassy and the United States Embassy, where they delivered petitions calling for a rerun of the election. In an effort to help calm the situation, I made telephone calls to both Mr. Weah and Mrs. Johnson Sirleaf to urge them to ensure that their supporters exercised patience and allowed the counting of votes to be completed. I called on them to channel all complaints through the established legal channels and assured them that the United Nations and other international partners would ensure that the authorities concerned investigated all alleged irregularities rapidly, properly and transparently. My Special Representative, Alan Doss, the ECOWAS mediator, regional leaders and other international representatives in Monrovia conveyed similar messages to the two candidates, which helped to reduce tensions.

12. On 16 November, the National Elections Commission began holding open hearings on 16 complaints it had received concerning alleged irregularities in the conduct of the presidential run-off election. UNMIL also initiated a review, which was aimed at tracking the movement of all ballot papers.

13. The final official results of the run-off election were certified by the National Elections Commission's Board of Commissioners and announced on 23 November. Out of 805,572 valid votes from the 3,070 polling places, Mrs. Johnson Sirleaf obtained 478,526 (59.4 per cent) and Mr. Weah 327,046 (40.6 per cent). Voter turnout was 61 per cent. In keeping with the Electoral Reform Law, the parties were allowed one week to protest the declaration of the results, after which the National Elections Commission had one month to respond to the protests. After receiving the ruling of the National Elections Commission, the complainants may also lodge an appeal with the Supreme Court of Liberia.

United Nations role in supporting the elections

14. UNMIL, in coordination with Liberian national security agencies, put in place detailed security arrangements to ensure a secure and safe environment for the 11 October and 8 November elections. The Transitional Government deployed 4,000 Liberian National Police personnel, including 1,800 officers trained by UNMIL, who provided point security at the polling centres. UNMIL police, including some 400 formed police unit personnel, supported the national police at the polling

centres. UNMIL troops were deployed at key locations and conducted robust patrols across the country to provide a security umbrella for the elections.

15. The National Elections Commission relied heavily on UNMIL for logistical support. The UNMIL Electoral Division assisted the National Elections Commission in designing and procuring ballots, while the Mission's vehicles and air assets were used to move voting materials and personnel to polling centres around the country.

16. The Mission's public information and electoral components, together with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), supported the National Elections Commission's voter education efforts, as well as its media and information centre. On the polling days, the Mission assisted in the deployment of national and international observers, as well as press reporters, to all electoral districts, while UNMIL Radio aired up-to-date reports on voting across the country.

17. The UNMIL gender unit focused on ensuring that there was a gender perspective in voter handbooks and on advocating for the recruitment of women as polling agents, electoral staff and observers. Working closely with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the gender unit also supported the national sensitization campaign led by the Ministry of Gender and Development, which encouraged women to vote.

18. The European Commission, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the International Foundation for Election Systems provided technical assistance and financial support to the National Elections Commission. In collaboration with the European Commission, UNDP assisted with the procurement of election materials and equipment.

III. Deployment of the United Nations Mission in Liberia

19. As at 1 December, UNMIL troop strength stood at 14,832. The Mission's police strength stood at 1,088 out of the authorized total of 1,115, including 478 personnel in four formed police units and 18 corrections officers (see annex). During the reporting period, the activities of UNMIL military and police focused on creating a stable security environment for the elections and on the reform of the security sector. The troops remained deployed in four sectors, with sector headquarters located in Monrovia, Tubmanburg, Zwedru and Gbarnga. UNMIL police personnel are deployed in Monrovia and at the Freeport, Roberts International Airport, Spriggs Payne Airport and 25 other sites across the country, with the four formed police units stationed in Monrovia, Buchanan, Gbarnga and Zwedru.

20. There are currently 538 international staff in the Mission, 31 per cent of whom are women. The Mission also had 264 United Nations Volunteers, 168 of whom worked on the elections, as well as 764 national staff.

IV. Security situation

21. The overall security situation in Liberia remained calm, but fragile. The main sources of potentially serious security challenges were Armed Forces of Liberia personnel who were not satisfied with their demobilization and retirement benefits,

ex-combatants who were awaiting reintegration opportunities, disgruntled supporters of the Congress for Democratic Change after the run-off elections (see section II) and members of the former Anti-Terrorist Unit who threatened to disrupt the national elections if they were excluded from the armed forces demobilization programme. Security problems in western Côte d'Ivoire also remained a potential threat to the efforts to consolidate stability in Liberia.

22. On 24 October, a crowd of demobilized irregular armed forces personnel demonstrated outside the Ministry of Defence, protesting non-payment of their full demobilization benefits. On the following day, they constructed roadblocks and threw stones at Liberian Government vehicles. UNMIL formed police units and troops intervened to disperse the group. At the end of October, the Ministry of Defence made payments towards the salary arrears of both regular and irregular armed forces personnel, thereby reducing tensions.

23. At the same time, members of the Anti-Terrorist Unit, an armed militia created by former President Charles Taylor, claimed that they were entitled to receive demobilization benefits under the security sector reform programme and threatened to cause "inconveniences in the peace process" if this matter was not addressed. Following consultations with the Ministry of National Defence, the National Security Agency and the National Commission on Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration and Rehabilitation, the unit acknowledged that it had already benefited from the disarmament and demobilization programme and therefore could not receive additional benefits from the security sector reform programme.

24. During the period under review, ex-combatants awaiting reintegration programmes protested delays in the delivery of reintegration opportunities, while those already in reintegration programmes protested the late payment of reintegration benefits, delays in graduation ceremonies and the late distribution of tool kits. In addition, the majority of ex-combatants who were illegally occupying the Guthrie Rubber Plantation and the Butaw Oil Palm Corporation failed to register for reintegration programmes due to the lucrative nature of their illegal activities. These ex-combatants will be encouraged to take advantage of the recently concluded management agreement between the Transitional Government and the Agro Resources Corporation, which aims to provide employment to an estimated 3,000 war-affected Guthrie residents.

Preparations for providing security for the Special Court for Sierra Leone

25. In accordance with Security Council resolution 1626 (2005), UNMIL assumed responsibility for the provision of security to the Special Court for Sierra Leone on 1 December 2005. By that resolution, the Council authorized a temporary increase in UNMIL military strength, to 15,250 military personnel until 31 March 2006, in order to ensure that the Mission's capabilities were not reduced during the politically sensitive period following the elections in Liberia. A company-sized unit of 250 Nigerian military personnel from the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) is currently deployed at the Court. This company will continue to provide security at the Court under the command of UNMIL until 15 January 2006, when it will be replaced by troops from another troop-contributing country. National military teams from countries contributing troops to UNMIL have also conducted

assessment missions to Sierra Leone with a view to preparing arrangements to provide support to the military guard force deployed at the Special Court, in the event of a serious security situation affecting the operations of the Court.

V. Regional aspects

26. The fragile peace process in Côte d'Ivoire continues to cast a shadow over the efforts of UNMIL to stabilize Liberia. In preparation for a possible influx of refugees from Côte d'Ivoire, UNMIL, United Nations agencies and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) have developed an inter-agency contingency plan under the leadership of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which will provide for some 100,000 Ivorian refugees, Liberian returnees and third-country nationals. The plan focuses on agency responsibilities, possible settlement sites, the pre-positioning of relief items and security arrangements. During the reporting period, there were a few reports of sporadic movement between the two countries by Ivorians and Liberians who have family members on both sides of the border.

27. Persistent reports have been received regarding the recruitment of former child combatants from Liberia to join the armed groups in Côte d'Ivoire. As noted in my previous report, UNMIL and the Transitional Government have established a joint task force to investigate and deter any attempt to recruit Liberians to participate in conflicts in Côte d'Ivoire or in the wider subregion. To that end, in October, UNMIL troops increased air and ground patrolling in border areas. They also conducted comprehensive searches of vehicles at checkpoints on the basis of information received. UNMIL and the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) have continued to share information and conduct coordinated border patrols. In October, UNMIL troops in sector 4 detained an individual suspected of involvement in the recruitment of Liberian ex-combatants. The suspect was handed over to the national authorities, and the case is currently before the Liberian courts.

28. Cross-border liaison between UNMIL and UNAMSIL will continue until the latter hands over responsibilities to the United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone. UNMIL is also keeping a watch on the situation in the Guinée forestière region of Guinea, where there is a concentration of refugees from neighbouring countries and reported infiltrations by armed elements.

29. On 20 October, UNMIL hosted a meeting of the heads of United Nations peacekeeping and political missions in West Africa, which was chaired by my Special Representative for West Africa, Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah. The meeting welcomed the successful elections in Liberia and stressed the need for elected officials to remain accountable to the people of Liberia for the proper use of the country's natural and financial resources. The meeting also urged the Ivorian parties to implement Security Council resolution 1633 (2005) of 21 October 2005, in order to create conditions that would permit the holding of free, fair and transparent elections next year, and commended the preparations made for the smooth drawdown of UNAMSIL.

VI. Support for security sector reform

A. Liberian National Police

30. Further progress was made in the training and restructuring of the Liberian National Police. The earlier announced target of 1,800 trained Liberian National Police personnel was achieved by the time of the October elections. In addition, the 300 police personnel who recently completed specialized training in Nigeria will form part of a police support unit tasked with dealing with riot control and violent crimes. Nigeria has pledged to provide equipment, including 50 side arms, to support this unit. More than 300 Special Security Service personnel and 152 Liberian Seaport Police personnel have graduated from the United Nations training programme, while 20 Liberian National Police officers and 10 Special Security Service officers have completed a senior leadership qualification course.

31. During the reporting period, the Chairman of the National Transitional Government of Liberia, Charles Gyude Bryant, approved a new structure for the Special Security Service. Under this structure, the authorized full strength of the Special Security Service will be reduced from its current strength of 1,287 to 395, including 35 civilian staff. The demobilization of the redundant Special Security Service personnel remains on hold, as the National Transitional Government is unable to raise the $900,000 required to fund this exercise. At the same time, $3.9 million is also urgently needed for the demobilization of police personnel who are ineligible to join the reformed Liberian National Police.

32. The recent United States donation of $1.6 million for operating expenses and renovations at the Police Academy should allow the police training programme to continue for another year. However, at least $600,000 is urgently needed for operating expenses to bring the number of trained Liberian National Police personnel to the provisional full strength of 3,500. An additional $4 million is also required for the rehabilitation of police infrastructure and for capital improvements to the Police Academy.

33. UNMIL police personnel and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) are working closely with the Liberian National Police to strengthen its capacity to deal with cases involving the protection of women and children. A total of 25 officers trained in the protection of women and children have so far been deployed in Montserrado county. The training programme will be expanded throughout Liberia over the next three years.

B. Armed Forces of Liberia

34. The programme to restructure the Armed Forces of Liberia, which is led by the United States of America, made further progress during the period under review. The first phase of the demobilization of 9,400 irregular personnel recruited into the armed forces after the outbreak of the civil war in 1989 was successfully completed on 10 September, with each conscript receiving $540 in severance pay. The second phase of the programme, under which 4,273 regular members recruited before the conflict will be retired, commenced on 17 October. However, the latter phase, initially scheduled to be completed by the end of September, has stalled due to lack of adequate funding. As at 1 December, only 2,227 regular armed forces personnel

had been retired. On 25 November, the Transitional Government approved a fortnightly payment of $200,000 for demobilized armed forces personnel. Despite the generous contributions of $4 million from South Africa and $2 million from the United States of America for this vital programme, there is still a shortfall of approximately $3 million in funding for this phase.

35. The recruitment and training of personnel for the new Armed Forces of Liberia cannot begin before the demobilization and retirement of the old armed forces personnel are completed. In the meantime, due to acute budgetary constraints, the projection for the overall strength of the new Armed Forces of Liberia was reduced from 4,000 to 2,000 personnel. It is hoped that the final strength of the restructured armed forces will not be determined solely on the basis of available resources, but will be kept under review to take into account long-term national requirements and potential external threats in a subregional neighbourhood in which the security situation is expected to remain unpredictable and fragile for the foreseeable future.

36. In my last report, I noted that both the Transitional Government and the United States of America had requested the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1521 (2003) to grant an exception to the arms embargo to allow the importation of light weapons and equipment for use in the training of new army recruits under United States supervision. A request was also made by the Transitional Government for a limited number of side arms for use by the newly trained national police personnel, who would be closely mentored and monitored by UNMIL. I trust that the Committee will give urgent consideration to these requests, because these measures would contribute significantly to efforts to build the capacity of Liberia's national security agencies to maintain security in the country.

C. Restructuring of other security agencies

37. UNMIL continued to work closely with the Transitional Government on the restructuring of other law enforcement agencies in the country. Thus far, apart from the Liberian National Police, the Seaport Police and the Special Security Service, another 12 statutory law enforcement agencies have been identified. UNMIL has completed the registration of personnel from 11 of these agencies. The vetting process for the law enforcement personnel from the Bureau of Immigration, the Ministry of National Security and Roberts International Airport has also been completed. The total number of registered law enforcement personnel is currently 10,335, of which 3,742 are from the Liberian National Police. UNMIL has also assigned technical advisers to the Bureau of Immigration, the Special Security Service and Roberts International Airport to assist with building the capacity of these agencies.

VII. Disarmament, demobilization, rehabilitation and reintegration

38. Since the formal closure of the disarmament and demobilization programme in November 2004, UNMIL has continued to collect weapons and ammunition voluntarily surrendered or discovered during search operations. So far, some 400 weapons, 49,062 rounds of ammunition and 389 pieces of unexploded ordnance have been collected. A UNDP community arms-collection and development pilot project was launched in September in Grand Gedeh, Lofa and Nimba counties.

However, $7.5 million is still required for the implementation of this vital programme countrywide.

39. Over 26,000 ex-combatants are still waiting to be placed in reintegration and rehabilitation projects. The National Commission on Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration and Rehabilitation is operating six counselling and referral offices for demobilized ex-combatants in Buchanan, Gbarnga, Harper, Monrovia, Voinjama and Zwedru, which provide information on the availability of educational and other reintegration opportunities. However, these offices continue to face a number of challenges, including inadequate administrative and logistical support. UNICEF continues to conduct follow-up monitoring of former child combatants who were reunited with their families and has established skills-training programmes at border-crossing areas in Grand Gedeh and Nimba counties.

40. As highlighted in my earlier reports, 612 ex-combatants who identified themselves as foreign nationals during the disarmament and demobilization process are still to be repatriated to their home countries. ICRC, which continues to support the repatriation exercise, has an outstanding caseload of 17 children associated with the former fighting forces who are waiting for their guardians to be traced in their countries of origin.

VIII. Promoting human rights, national reconciliation and justice

A. Human rights

41. UNMIL continued its human rights monitoring and protection activities throughout the country during the reporting period. On 16 November, the Mission launched its first bimonthly public report on the human rights situation in Liberia. The report highlighted the major human rights challenges during August and September and made recommendations for improvement. The human rights issues which were identified as requiring priority attention include the weak institutional base for the rule of law, poor detention conditions, sexual and gender-based violence and denial of economic, social and cultural rights.

42. From 9 to 29 September, the World Health Organization (WHO) supported the National Transitional Government's efforts to carry out sexual and gender-based violence surveys in four counties. The preliminary findings indicated that 91.7 per cent of 1,216 women and girls interviewed had been subjected to multiple violent acts during Liberia's conflict.

43. Progress was made in operationalizing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The selection panel for the Commission screened 150 candidates nominated by the Liberian public and provided a shortlist of names to Chairman Bryant on 23 September. On 18 October, Chairman Bryant released the list of nine approved commissioners. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) also provided the name of one of the three international technical advisers who will support the Commission's operations. The other two will be designated by ECOWAS. In support of the Commission's work, UNDP and OHCHR completed a project mapping out the major human rights violations that took place during Liberia's conflict. The process involved interviewing over 13,000

people and will assist the Commission in developing a comprehensive database of human rights violations in Liberia.

44. The independent expert on the promotion and protection of human rights in Liberia, Charlotte Abaka, visited the country, for the second time in 2005, from 25 September to 7 October. At the end of her visit, Dr. Abaka expressed particular concern about the weak state of the rule of law and welcomed the inception of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

B. Support for the judicial system

45. The programme to reform the Liberian judicial system continued to make steady progress. During the reporting period, 20 new circuit-court judges and magistrates assigned to 145 courts were commissioned. In October, UNMIL organized a four-day workshop for legal-aid providers to help build the capacity of private defence lawyers, which was aimed at reducing the number of pre-trial detentions and violations of the rights of defendants. In addition, 13 court renovation projects have begun under the UNMIL quick-impact projects programme.

46. As part of its post-election priorities, UNMIL will work with the new Government and other partners to develop a national judicial reform strategy and a funding strategy for critical areas of reform. Currently, reform efforts are hampered by an acute lack of facilities, material resources, funding and qualified prosecutors and defence counsel. I would therefore urge the new Government and the international community to increase their efforts to secure the necessary resources to restore the rule of law throughout Liberia.

C. Corrections

47. UNMIL continued to assist the Bureau of Corrections of the Ministry of Justice to improve conditions at correctional institutions. During the reporting period, a sanitation facility and an exercise yard were constructed at the Gbarnga prison under the UNMIL quick-impact projects programme. Work on a water and sanitation project is ongoing at the Monrovia Central Prison. Prisoners continue to receive food and other supplies from the World Food Programme (WFP), ICRC and other partners.

48. The United States of America has donated $600,000 to support the refurbishment of correctional institutions, including sanitation facilities and basic security equipment. Norway has pledged $460,000, which will be used to support training activities and the refurbishment of the Monrovia Central Prison. However, additional funding will be required to rehabilitate physical structures, purchase security equipment and train corrections officers.

IX. Restoration and consolidation of State authority

49. Further progress was made in restoring and consolidating State authority in the counties, particularly in the rehabilitation of government infrastructure. With support from USAID, the work on 5 out of the 10 administration buildings

earmarked for rehabilitation and equipping was completed in Bong, Grand Cape Mount, Gbarpolu, Margibi and Nimba counties. In addition, the construction of the Tubmanburg branch of the Central Bank of Liberia has been completed, and construction work on the Zwedru and Voinjama branches has begun. The opening of these branches will enable the Government to pay civil servants their salaries in the counties. There is a need for major investment by the Government in logistics, infrastructure and training of personnel, if central and local government structures are to function effectively.

50. A national census of civil servants was conducted by the Governance Reform Commission, in collaboration with the Liberia Institute of Statistics and Geo-Information Survey. The census enabled the Transitional Government to remove ghost workers from the government payroll. The Governance Reform Commission has also produced a draft code of conduct for civil servants and public officials.

51. UNMIL is facilitating efforts to resolve property disputes and promote reconciliation between ethnic groups. In several counties, the Mission has organized workshops and town-hall meetings to explore ways to resolve such disputes.

X. Progress made in the implementation of the Governance and Economic Management Assistance Programme

52. In its resolution 1626 (2005), the Security Council requested me to include information on progress made in the implementation of the Governance and Economic Management Assistance Programme (GEMAP) in my regular reports on UNMIL. GEMAP document, which was signed on 9 September by the National Transitional Government of Liberia and the International Contact Group on Liberia, contains provisions aimed at ensuring the proper management and accountability of Liberia's public revenue streams; transparency in procurement and concession-granting processes; and increased government capacity to deal with corruption.

53. A GEMAP technical team, comprising representatives of the International Contact Group on Liberia, including UNMIL and UNDP, and international financial institutions has been meeting regularly to work out the details concerning the key mechanisms for international support for the implementation of the programme. The technical team, which works with a counterpart national team, has focused on refining organizational charts, defining areas of responsibility for the international partners and the monitoring framework for the implementation of the programme. It has also drafted terms of reference for the international financial controllers who will be assigned to the key State-owned enterprises and held consultations with civil society with respect to its participation in the Economic Governance Steering Committee.

54. The Economic Governance Steering Committee, which is the highest body charged with overseeing the implementation of GEMAP, held its first meeting on 26 October and has been meeting fortnightly since that time. The Committee is chaired by the head of State of Liberia, and a vice-chairperson is designated by the international partners. The Economic Governance Steering Committee has reviewed the operations of the Transitional Government's Cash Management Committee, which was established to control excessive government spending, and the terms of reference for internationally recruited financial controllers for the Forestry

Development Authority and the National Port Authority, as well as for other State-owned enterprises.

55. UNMIL and UNDP have been actively involved in the implementation of GEMAP. UNDP has elaborated a GEMAP policy matrix and a monitoring framework and is supporting an anti-corruption survey, as well as a variety of public-sector reform measures, in partnership with the Governance Reform Commission and international partners. UNDP is also making efforts to establish linkages between GEMAP and other programming frameworks, such as the Liberia Results-Focused Transitional Framework, so as to ensure effective coordination on the ground. UNMIL is participating actively in the Economic Governance Steering Committee, and its Legal and Judicial System Support Division will play a significant support role with respect to GEMAP efforts to combat corruption.

56. In September, Chairman Bryant signed into law the Act creating the Public Procurement and Concessions Commission, which contains provisions aimed at improving government procurement procedures. As part of the process of handover to the new Government, the Chairman has instructed government institutions to prepare an inventory of government assets. However, the General Service Agency, which has begun to register government assets, has encountered resistance from some government officials. Furthermore, on 17 November, the National Transitional Legislative Assembly adopted a resolution, which had been vetoed by Chairman Bryant, authorizing Assembly members to retain official vehicles upon the expiration of their tenure in office. The work of the Executive Task Force on Anti-Corruption has also continued to be hampered by the non-cooperation of government officials and the lack of resources.

57. GEMAP is an important initiative that, if faithfully implemented, would strengthen Liberia's sovereignty by making more resources available to the Government to enable it to rebuild the economy, create employment and deliver education and health services to the people of Liberia.

XI. Restoring proper management of natural resources

58. The National Transitional Government of Liberia has achieved mixed progress in gaining full control over the exploitation of the country's natural resources. Some strides have been made in fulfilling the conditions for admission to the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme. The Government has appointed a chief implementing officer for the certification scheme and has deployed 120 mineral agents and inspectors throughout the country. Moreover, the Ministry of Lands, Mines and Energy has prepared a certificate of origin for all diamonds extracted in Liberia and intends to use some $5.6 million pledged by the United States of America to support this exercise.

59. However, the Transitional Government has continued to struggle to establish security throughout diamond-mining areas. Newly discovered deposits of diamonds in Gbarpolu and Nimba counties recently led to the movement of a significant number of speculators to these areas. Moreover, several local officials were reportedly engaged in the illegal sale of mining permits, in contravention of the directives issued by the Ministry of Lands, Mines and Energy.

60. Progress in reforming the forestry sector has been slow. The Transitional Government has not rescinded fraudulently granted concessions, as recommended by the Forestry Concession Review Committee, preferring instead to refer them to the Ministry of Justice for action. In September, the Government lifted the ban on pit-sawing, which had been imposed by the Forestry Development Authority in 2004 in order to reduce the level of deforestation. The lifting of the ban was due to the high demand for timber for rehabilitation and reconstruction activities. The Forestry Development Authority has asked UNMIL for assistance in implementing a pit-sawing management and monitoring system.

61. Following the evacuation of over 1,000 people who were illegally residing, hunting and mining in Sapo National Park, the World Bank disbursed $1 million, through the Global Environment Facility, for a project designed to support the activities of the Forestry Development Authority in protecting the park. The project is being implemented by Fauna and Flora International, a non-governmental organization. UNMIL has been working closely with the Liberian Forestry Initiative to formulate a workplan to help the new Government to manage its natural resources.

XII. National recovery, reconstruction and development

62. During the reporting period, progress was made in assisting war-affected populations, including former combatants, internally displaced persons and refugees, in returning to their local communities. In that regard, UNMIL relief, recovery and rehabilitation unit established a reintegration task force in Zwedru, Grand Gedeh county, to coordinate reintegration and rehabilitation activities. Similar task forces will be set up in other parts of the country. UNMIL also facilitated the implementation of community-based basic service projects and continued to collaborate with other partners on the rehabilitation of access roads to villages and markets.

63. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in collaboration with WFP, distributed rice seeds and agricultural tools. It also provided training and technical support to 13,000 farmers in 14 counties and started assisting 748 livestock farmers in Nimba county. FAO, in conjunction with the Ministry of Agriculture, UNMIL and several international non-governmental organizations, undertook a food monitoring and assessment exercise throughout the country to identify shortfalls in crop production and their implications for food security. The information gathered from the exercise will lay the foundation for the development of a national recovery and rehabilitation plan for the agriculture sector.

64. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization is training university and college teachers. UNICEF has distributed learning materials, including 5,356 educational replenishment kits, to nearly 2,000 public schools, benefiting more than 400,000 students and 12,000 teachers. UNDP is helping to build the capacity of national organizations and conducted three training workshops for national non-governmental organizations during the reporting period.

XIII. Humanitarian situation

65. The delivery of humanitarian assistance continued throughout Liberia, despite the challenges posed by the rainy season and the poor condition of the country's roads. Under the leadership of the Liberia Refugee, Repatriation and Resettlement Commission, UNHCR, WFP, the International Organization for Migration and UNMIL worked together to accelerate the return of refugees and internally displaced persons to their communities of origin. As at 5 November, 232,579 internally displaced persons, representing more than 44,819 families, had received transportation grants, domestic items and food.

66. UNHCR continues to facilitate the voluntary repatriation of Liberian refugees from other parts of the subregion. Assistance has been provided to 42,376 registered refugees in returning home from camps in various countries. In addition, an estimated 150,000 refugees have returned spontaneously from countries bordering Liberia since the end of fighting in July 2003. UNHCR and its partners are preparing to accelerate the repatriation process to take advantage of the dry season from November 2005 to June 2006.

67. During the reporting period, WFP delivered 10,714.59 tons of food each month to 503,707 beneficiaries, including 303,000 schoolchildren in 14 counties, 806 Ivorian refugees and 114,422 internally displaced persons residing in camps. WFP also provided a four-month resettlement package totalling 3,743 metric tons of food to 61,000 resettled internally displaced persons and 33,000 returnees. Food assistance also reached 25,000 beneficiaries through various nutrition programmes, including those for maternal and child health, supplementary and therapeutic feeding and people living with HIV and AIDS. In addition, WFP provided food assistance to 26,000 beneficiaries under agriculture, infrastructure and training programmes in support of local community initiatives for recovery and reconstruction in Liberia.

68. During the period under review, UNICEF and WHO embarked on the third round of polio vaccinations for children. Since the programme commenced in October 2004, some 1.2 million children have been targeted for vaccination. UNICEF also contributed to the reopening of 27 health clinics throughout the country.

69. Community-based reintegration projects are being implemented in areas of return to enhance the capacity of war-affected populations to receive returnees and support vulnerable populations in rebuilding their lives. The Humanitarian Information Centre is in the process of compiling a comprehensive listing of social-service facilities available throughout the country.

70. UNMIL, in collaboration with the United Nations agencies, holds monthly humanitarian coordination meetings in several counties. Moreover, a three-day Common Country Assessment and United Nations Development Assistance Framework workshop was held in Monrovia on 27 September. The workshop was attended by representatives of United Nations agencies with programme activities in Liberia.

XIV. HIV/AIDS

71. UNMIL has continued to provide its personnel with awareness training and sensitization on HIV/AIDS. The Mission has a voluntary HIV counselling and testing centre and provides mobile voluntary counselling and testing services to personnel stationed in the interior of the country. UNMIL also produces posters with educational messages on HIV/AIDS.

72. During the reporting period, UNMIL undertook a number of HIV/AIDS-related initiatives targeted at the Liberian population. These included assisting the Transitional Government in the conduct of awareness and sensitization campaigns among religious, media and academic organizations on HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted infections and prevention of mother-to-child transmission; holding consultations with Médecins sans frontières on the establishment of programmes in Monrovia for the prevention of mother-to-child transmission and for anti-retroviral therapy; and facilitating fund-raising for the Liberian Orphans of AIDS Foundation to pay the school fees of children orphaned by AIDS.

73. WHO is coordinating a technical group, with representatives of the Ministry of Health, non-governmental organizations, UNDP, UNICEF and USAID, which focuses on projects related to HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis and improving the health system. UNIFEM has supported efforts to establish a national network for women living with HIV/AIDS in Liberia.

XV. Gender

74. UNMIL continues to promote gender mainstreaming in the Mission's activities. It is coordinating a public information campaign on violence against women and girls in Liberia. It is also providing technical advice on the protection of women to the Sapo National Park working group for community rehabilitation programmes and extending support to non-governmental organizations with regard to ways to have access to funds for community projects. The Mission has trained 30 members of the human rights protection forum on gender and women's rights and helped to build the capacity of the Association of Disabled Females International to engage in advocacy activities.

75. As part of its post-election strategy, UNMIL plans to support the 13 elected women legislators (five senators and eight representatives) and to advance women's participation in the political process and decision-making. In that context, UNMIL, in collaboration with UNDP and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, will provide capacity-building training for women legislators.

XVI. Personnel conduct and discipline issues

76. In its resolution 1626 (2005), the Security Council requested me to provide information on efforts undertaken by UNMIL to implement my zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse and to ensure the full compliance of UNMIL personnel with the United Nations code of conduct. The Mission has also established a training group, comprising representatives of the civilian, military and police training cells and the Mission's sexual exploitation and abuse task force to

provide training in relation to sexual exploitation and abuse. In September, UNMIL began implementing a training strategy in respect of sexual exploitation and abuse. All incoming staff are receiving thorough briefings on the subject of sexual exploitation and abuse.

77. The Mission continued to monitor, investigate and respond to all reports of cases of sexual exploitation and abuse involving its personnel. Investigations are conducted by a team of professional investigators drawn from the military, police and civilian components of the Mission. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 59/287, category I investigations, which include cases of sexual exploitation and abuse, will soon be conducted by resident investigators of the Office of Internal Oversight Services in Liberia.

78. Between 1 January and 14 October, UNMIL received 34 complaints of alleged sexual exploitation and abuse, of which 22 involved United Nations military personnel, 5 related to police, 4 involved international civilian staff, and 2 related to a United Nations Volunteer and a contractor. One allegation related to a person who could not be positively identified as a member of UNMIL. The sexual exploitation and abuse team has completed investigations into 21 cases, in 13 of which allegations were found to be substantiated and in 8 unsubstantiated. Three cases could not be pursued due to lack of sufficient information to launch a meaningful investigation. Where allegations have been substantiated, appropriate action has been taken to repatriate, dismiss or discipline United Nations personnel. The remaining 10 cases are still being investigated. UNMIL will continue to vigorously enforce my zero-tolerance policy and ensure that all sexual exploitation and abuse allegations are thoroughly investigated.

XVII. Mission support

79. During the reporting period, UNMIL gave priority to supporting the electoral process, including through the maintenance of the main supply routes and the use of its air assets to resupply personnel in the interior of the country. Over the coming months, the Mission's logistical efforts will focus on the consolidation of force sustainment, including the provision of hardwall accommodation, the installation of a microwave network to sectors two and three, improving utility services and facilitating new force deployments.

80. UNMIL has begun a phased move of its personnel to its new headquarters in the Pan-African Plaza building in Monrovia. The relocation of personnel and offices is scheduled to be completed by 15 December.

XVIII. Observations

81. The successful national elections are an important milestone in the Liberian peace process. The elections constituted the penultimate step towards completing the two-year transition period stipulated in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement signed by the Liberian parties in Accra in August 2003. In keeping with that Agreement, the transition process will come to an end in January 2006 with the installation of the new Government that has emerged from these democratic elections. I commend the Liberian people for coming out in large numbers to

exercise their right to vote. I congratulate the candidates on conducting their campaigns in a peaceful manner. I also wish to extend warm congratulations to Ellen Johnson Sirleaf on her victory in the presidential election.

82. The achievements made during the transition period, including the disarmament of a considerable number of combatants, the disbandment of the former armed factions, the establishment of a stable security environment throughout the country, the partial restoration of State authority in the counties, the resettlement of a substantial number of internally displaced persons and returning refugees, the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the launching of the security-sector reform programme and the agreement to establish the Governance and Economic Management Assistance Programme, have laid a good foundation which the new Government should build upon. The new Government enjoys a strong mandate from the people and a substantial amount of goodwill on the part of Liberia's international partners. It must therefore be prepared to move without delay to meet the high expectations of the people.

83. The challenges ahead are formidable. Indeed, the country is still only at the early stages of reconstruction and rehabilitation. To begin with, there are major residual tasks from the transition period, including not only healing the wounds from the war and the divisions resulting from the electoral process, but also completing the reintegration of war-affected persons and ex-combatants, consolidating State authority throughout the country, promoting human rights, rehabilitating the judicial system and ensuring access to justice, and carrying forward the security-sector reform programme and the implementation of the vital economic governance programme. There are also other pressing priorities that were not part of the transition programme, including constitutional reform, economic recovery, poverty reduction and the provision of basic services such as water and electricity, which will require attention.

84. Liberia's international partners have made commendable efforts in supporting the implementation of the transition priorities set out in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. I urge them to stay the course and help the new Government to complete the unfinished agenda and tackle daunting post-election challenges. In this regard, I am particularly concerned about the uncompleted tasks of security-sector reform and the reintegration of numerous ex-combatants. I therefore strongly appeal to Member States that are in a position to do so to extend urgent assistance to these vital programmes.

85. In the area of governance reform, the mandate of the Governance Reform Commission established by the Comprehensive Peace Agreement will expire in January. Liberia's international partners stand ready to discuss with the incoming Government a successor arrangement to move the governance-reform process forward. A successor body, the Public Procurement and Concessions Commission, has already been identified to replace the Contracts and Monopolies Commission as from 1 January 2006. From the outset, the new Government will need to ensure that it focuses on economic governance issues, particularly with respect to the management of public funds and natural resources.

86. The President-elect, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, has committed herself to promoting national reconciliation, pursuing the implementation of the economic governance programme and adopting policies and programmes that will deliver tangible benefits to the people. I hope that the new Government will be as inclusive as possible, that

it will promptly open an effective and sustained dialogue with the people of Liberia and that it will, in collaboration with the legislature, set clear priorities for action and change. The dialogue should focus on identifying programmes that will improve the living conditions of the population in the shortest possible time and on priority policy and institutional reforms that are pivotal to the political stability and economic progress of Liberia. Under the leadership of my Special Representative, UNMIL and the United Nations country team are developing a peacebuilding framework to guide the United Nations support for the new Government.

87. As requested by the Security Council in its resolution 1626 (2005), I intend to submit, in my March 2006 report to the Council, recommendations on adjustments to the deployment of UNMIL, including specific benchmarks. These benchmarks will take into account the findings of a multidisciplinary assessment mission which will visit Liberia in January 2006; the outcome of consultations with the new Government, Liberia's international partners and other stakeholders, and the new responsibilities assigned to UNMIL, including the protection of the Special Court, the detention of former President Charles Taylor if he returns to Liberia and possible cross-border support for UNOCI.

88. In conclusion, I would like to commend my Special Representative and all civilian and military staff of UNMIL for their contributions to the peace process in difficult and challenging circumstances. I would also like to express my gratitude to the countries that are contributing troops and police personnel to the Mission, as well as to ECOWAS, the African Union, the International Contact Group on Liberia, United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and humanitarian organizations, as well as the numerous bilateral donors and international and local non-governmental organizations, for their steadfast and continuing efforts to return peace to Liberia.

Annex

United Nations Mission in Liberia: military and civilian police strength as at 1 December 2005

	Military component				
Country	*Military observers*	*Staff officers*	*Troops*	*Total*	*Civilian police*
Argentina				0	1
Bangladesh	17	12	3 183	3 212	29
Benin	4	1		5	
Bolivia	1	1		2	
Bosnia and Herzegovina				0	12
Brazil		1		1	
Bulgaria	2			2	
China	5	8	557	570	25
Croatia		3		3	
Czech Republic	3			3	3
Denmark	2			2	
Ecuador	4	1		5	
El Salvador	3			3	2
Ethiopia	14	7	2 536	2 557	
Egypt	8			8	
Fiji				0	29
Finland		2		2	
France		1		1	
Gambia	5			5	30
Germany			18	18	4
Ghana	10	4	847	861	40
Indonesia	3			3	
Ireland		6	396	402	
Jamaica				0	10
Jordan	8	7	115	130	139
Kenya	1	3		4	21
Kyrgyzstan	4			4	3
Malawi		2		2	19
Mali	2	1		3	
Malaysia	10			10	
Namibia	3	3	857	863	6
Nepal	3	2	40	45	255
Niger	1			1	3
Nigeria	19	14	1 943	1 976	164

Country	Military component				Civilian police
	Military observers	Staff officers	Troops	Total	
Norway				0	6
Pakistan	16	9	2 732	2 757	17
Paraguay	3	1		4	
Peru	3	3		6	
Philippines	3	5	164	172	31
Poland	2			2	3
Republic of Korea	1	1		2	
Republic of Moldova	3	1		4	
Romania	3			3	
Russian Federation	6			6	21
Samoa				0	17
Senegal	3	3	600	606	10
Serbia and Montenegro	6			6	8
South Africa[a]				0	
Sri Lanka				0	11
Sweden	0	4	231	235	10
Togo	2	1		3	
Turkey				0	34
Uganda				0	20
Ukraine	3	1	300	304	11
United Kingdom		3		3	
United States of America	7	6		13	35
Uruguay				0	1
Yemen				0	3
Zambia	3			3	27
Zimbabwe				0	28
Total	**196**	**117**	**14 519**	**14 832**	**1 088**

[a] South Africa is no longer contributing military personnel to the Mission.

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.
UNMIL
Deployment as of December 2005
Sector boundary
International boundary
Provincial boundary
National capital
Airport
Main road
Railroad
SIERRA LEONE
GUINEA
LIBERIA
CÔTE D'IVOIRE
Atlantic Ocean
Monrovia
Sector 1
Sector 2
Sector 3
Sector 4
MONTSERRADO
GBARPOLU
LOFA
BOMI
GRAND CAPE MOUNT
BONG
NIMBA
MARGIBI
GRAND BASSA
RIVER CESS
GRAND GEDEH
SINOE
RIVER GEE
GRAND KRU
MARYLAND
OTHER DEPLOYMENT
Winsue
Phebe
Totota
Salala
Gbopolu
CAMP SCHEIFFELIN
Camp Scheiffelin
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December 2005 (Colour)
Department of Peacekeeping Operations
Cartographic Section